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A Mountain Campfire

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Compiled By

EDMOND S. MEANY,

President of The Mountaineers.

"On till at last I stand on topmost tip." Photo by A. W. Archer

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HENRY MORSE STEPHENS

INTRODUCTION.

The outing of The Mountaineers for 1909 was devoted to the exploration and enjoyment of the northern slopes of Mount Rainier. It embraced three weeks, from July 17 to August 7. The expedition was notable for several reasons: It was one of the few occasions that a successful ascent was made from that direction and it was the first time that women had made the ascent from the north side; there were present two delegates, E. W. Harnden and G. Dana Emerson, of the Appalachian Club of Boston, as well as Miss Katherine Reed, of Washington, D. C., and Miss Freda Sanford, of Connecticut; the Austrian Alpine Club was represented by Hans Otto Knispel, of Tyrol; there were as many as ninety-three in camp at one time and sixty-two of them made the ascent, the highest number that has ever gone to the top of Rainier in a single party; the intrepid leader of the party was Asahel Curtis, who accomplished his difficult task with his left arm bandaged to his body, the result of a recently broken collar-bone.

The permanent camp was in Moraine Park on the east side of Carbon Glacier. The temporary camp of the climbers was on a ledge of rocks about ten thousand feet above the sea and overlooking White River Glacier. Here was spent the night of Thursday, July 29, and at 4 a. m. of July 30 the ascent was begun. Returning too late to reach permanent camp, a second night was spent on the rocks, when the place was named in honor of the leader, Camp Curtis. When the summit was reached the party was impressed by the importance of an unnamed portion of the mountain. Columbia Crest is the highest dome, Liberty Cap is next and adjoining this is another peak seen to special advantage by those who climb from the north. To this portion of the summit The Mountaineers gave the name Russell Peak, in honor of the late Professor Israel Cook Russell, who

did so much toward surveying and charting the great mountain and its glaciers. The party was accompanied by Major E. S. Ingraham, who during the past twenty-five years had made five ascents from the south side and two unsuccessful attempts from the north side. On this occasion he was accompanied by his son, Kenneth, and three young companions. The party of five spent the night in the crater.

One enjoyable feature of the outing was the evening campfires. Here would assemble the entire party to hear the announcement of the next day's programme, after which all would join in the singing and other festivities. Half the names around Mount Rainier have been conferred by Major Ingraham. When that veteran arrived in camp he responded to a prompt request, by explaining the origin and meaning of many of the names. On another occasion he told of his ascent of Mount Saint Elias with the Duke d'Abruzzi, and at the same campfire Mr. Harnden conveyed a greeting from the Appalachain Club and Mr. Knispel rendered some Tyrolian songs with appropriate echoing yodles. One evening was devoted to a reading of John Muir's famous adventure on an Alaskan glacier with the little dog "Stickeen." One evening was devoted to an imitation of the "Pay Streak" at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, another to an Indian Powwow and a third to Limiricks, when there was displayed an unusual supply of talent for nonsense verse. Miss A. Margaret Coenen, of Tacoma, added to many programmes with her violin playing. Miss Katherine Reed wrote a sketch of the party, asking the members assembled to supply the adjectives. The result was a wonderful fabric, productive of much fun. The singing and the Sunday services were led by Rev. F. J. Van Horn. On each Sunday evening members of the party were called upon for quotations from the Scriptures or the poets referring to the mountains or life out-of-doors.

Two songs dedicated to The Mountaineers, and a number of original poems were read at the campfires. Individual copies of these were made until the supply of paper in camp was exhausted. Two of the climbers, A. W. Archer, and I. M. Jensen, of the Gateway Printing Company, have arranged for publishing the poems in the present form.

EDMOND S. MEANY.

Seattle, August, 1909.

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By REVEREND FRANCIS J. VAN HORN.

THE MOUNTAIN VOICES.

Dedicated to *The Mountaineers*, 24 July, 1909.

Air: "Old Black Joe."

Far, far away, their snowy peaks I see;
Far, far away, their voices call to me;
And in my soul the echoes surge and roll,
I hear the mountain voices calling,
Softly to me.

Chorus:
I'm coming, I'm coming,
And my heart is light and free;
I hear the mountain voices calling,
Softly to me.

Nearer I come to where the snow fields gleam,
Higher I climb, my mate the singing stream;
And as I rise, close to azure skies
My heart leaps high at voices calling,
Softly to me.

Now over crags still up I press and on,
Still step by step where icy dangers yawn;
Where glistening slopes, like shining, blessed hopes
Invite and lure, their voices calling,
Softly to me.

On till at last I stand on topmost tip!
Then shall my song burst out from joyful lip;
Then kin with cloud, my soul with rapture bowed,
I hush my heart to hear God calling,
Softly to me.

THE GREAT WHITE HILLS OF GOD.

From flaming depths of chaos old
  They came at His command;
Their fiery hearts stood still and cold,
  To own His royal hand;
In stately ranks they wait His word
In bowed worship of their Lord
  The great white hills of God.

And through the mystic ages dim
  They don their robes of snow,
In awful reverence of Him
  Whose sov'reign breath doth blow,
Who shakes with earthquake, smites with storm,
And chastens fierce each silent form
  The great white hills of God.

Comes man—a tiny, creeping thing—
  A bit of God's own self—
Beneath their shade to sport and sing
  Awhile forgetting pelf,
With them to worship and be still
And his best self with Heaven fulfill
  Amid the great white hills of God.

And he who feels akin to them
  With undefeated heart!
Would scale their sides, their heights contemn;
  At avalanche's start
Would laugh, rejoice at tempest's roar
And play with storm-clouds as they pour
  Around the great white hills of God.

But they—they calmly watch and wait
  While man puts forth his power;
Full well they know his certain fate,
  How short his little hour!
So, when he sings, they whisper "Soft!"
And when he faints, cry "Look aloft
  To the great white hills of God!"

The sunrise studs them thick with pearls,
With crimson links each fold;
The sunset every banner furls
Yet leaves their crowns of gold;
Then ghostly gray, they vigil keep
While tired man dares fall asleep
Among the great white hills of God.

Teach us, O great white hills, to trust,
Be silent and obey;
Thy secret tell to us whose dust
Shall mingle with thy gray;
From out the centuries speak to man
To count his years as but a span
To thine, O great white hills of God.

But yet, ye hills, I'd speak to thee,
Across the years I'd call;
My dust with thine may seek the sea,
My days be few and small,
My name be lost as ages roll
But I—a man—I have a soul,
O listen, great white hills of God.

To thee, O hills, I lift mine eyes
Whence cometh aid to me,
And o'er the hills up to the skies
Maker of mount and sea;
Amid the sorrow and the strife
Guard Thou each puny, precious life
As watch Thy great white hills, O God.

And when the upward toil is done,
When night and rest are near,
Give to each one at set of sun
In love to know no fear;
Through all the dark Thy presence shine
And in a morning all divine
To see the great white throne of God.

24 July, 1909.

By PROFESSOR EDMOND S. MEANY.

MOUNT RAINIER.

Thou king in ermine robes of crystal snow,
Lift high thy royal head serene and proud,
Disdain the stress of storm embattled cloud
That we on earth they majesty may know.
Thy crown in myriad hues doth glint and glow—
A lure for some in each swift hurrying crowd
Whose hopes are raised and hearts anew are vowed
To catch, like thee, God's light and onward throw.
May now thy imaged grandeur live and burn
In brain of men who scan thy glistening dome
Who cut the mooring cord and, listless, roam;
Give them the wit to mountain magic learn:
That lofty heights but type the souls that yearn
For supreme love in perfect human home.

"Thou king in ermine robes of crystal snow."

CLIMBING THE MOUNTAIN'S RUGGED STEEP.

Dedicated to *The Mountaineers*, 21 July, 1909.

Air: "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep."
Climbing the mountain's rugged steep,
I wake each day my faith to keep:
Believe my soul that God is near
When stars gleam from the azure clear,
Thy windows open tow'rd the blue
While God's pure light is pouring through.

Chorus:

Be sure, my soul, this faith to keep,
Climbing the mountain's rugged steep.
Be sure, my soul, this faith to keep,
Climbing the mountain's rugged steep.

And thus, my soul, through din and strife
As mountaineer reflect in life:
That trees defy the storm's cold wrath
And heather bounds the snowy path;
That more than these should man be brave
His pure heart's love to hold and save

CARBON GLACIER.

I hail thee, river of ice and snow,
Thou source of our valleys' fertile soil,
I climb thy seamy sides to know
A tithe of thy patient, ceaseless toil.

Grind, grind, grind
Huge stones to dust, oh, stream!
Grind, grind, grind
Till thy sides as mirrors gleam.

Thy open lips of ice doth pour
A gushing stream in noisy flood,
A stream released in joyful roar;
Behold! a glacier's milk-white blood.

Grind, grind, grind
To crumbling dust these stones!
Grind, grind, grind
The mountain's shattered bones!

Was this great rock by Titan tossed
Thy cold brown breast to crush and bruise
Or didst thy maiden, wintry frost,
Launch playful boat for seaward cruise?

Grind, grind, grind
The rocks however hurled!
Grind, grind, grind
Thou mill-stone of a world!

How weak the pen, how vain the brush
To catch the hues of this deep gash!
How here revealed thy power to crush,
How awful is thy breathing's crash!

Grind, grind, grind
In cruel jaws of ice!
Grind, grind, grind,
A Devil's Paradise!

New life from death, eternal whirl,
  How brief each puny span of life!
How long the atoms, grinding, swirl,
  Ere seized anew for a season's strife!

Grind, grind, grind
  To powder every stone!
Grind, grind, grind,
  New life will death atone!

I mount thy shoulders' utmost height,
  Where threat'ning ice-cliffs poise and nod,
Where avalanches roar in flight,
  Like flying demons cursed of God.

Grind, grind, grind,
  And grind exceedingly fine!
Grind, grind, grind,
  My Master's will and thine!

5 August, 1909.

"Where threat'ning ice-cliffs poise and nod." Photo by A. W. Archer

THE DOG-TOOTH VIOLET.

In the mountain's hanging gardens
I roamed in joy today
And saw a lavish treasure
In flowers that strewed the way.

They nod and sing a welcome,
They speak to those who know
Of life and love in summer
Of sleep beneath the snow.

And one with snowy petals
My memory ever thrills.
Thou art purest and the fairest,
Sweet lily of the hills.

1 August, 1909.

"Flowers that strewed the way."

MOUNTAIN HEATHER.

High on the mountains the heather bells grow,
High on the mountains where rivulets flow,
Up on the ridges where clean breezes blow,
High on the mountains the heather bells grow,

The marmot creeps,
The eaglet sleeps,
The linnet and junco nest and sing;
The mazama leaps,
O'er dazzling steeps,
Where heather bells sway and ring.

High on the mountains our brave spirits climb,
Up to the heights where the sun measures time,
Up where the stars and our hearts seem to rhyme,
High on the mountains our brave spirits climb.

The tired one sleeps,
When evening creeps,
And the planets their vespers sing;
Till the sun first peeps
In the vale's warm deeps
And the heather bells sway and ring.

High on the mountains the heather bells grow,
High on the mountains where rivulets flow,
Up on the ridges where clean breezes blow,
High on the mountains the heather bells grow,

4 August, 1909.

THE ALPINE FIR.

Rugged spire of emerald
I love thy lofty home.
Thy hands with upturned fingers
E'er beckon me to come.

Thy scars of winter tempest
On trunk and shattered limb
Proclaim the brave companion
Of mountain's cragged rim.

May I, like thee, in struggles
Breathe free the upper air;
May I be true and steadfast,
This to God in prayer.

1 August, 1909.

THE VIOLIN IN CAMP.

Seated round the campfire on the shoulders of Rainier
We were busy with our singing and the best of campfire cheer
When there fell a sudden silence and each one hushed to see
Whence came the quivering cadence of exquisite melody.

The alpine firs and hemlocks in stately columns stood
While through them poured the music, entrancing rythmic flood.
Was this a Druid's forest, where old spirits come to haunt
The new world's swift forgetting with a sweet and plaintive taunt?

Enchained each soul to silence, from needled boughs still fell
The strains of Handel's Largo, mysterious soothing spell;
O'er the valley sped the music, past the overhanging peak,
Sped on wings of mountain breezes that a way to Heaven seek.

Should I stand midst chiselled columns neath cathedral's spiral tower
And bathe in all the brilliance of the organ's mighty power,
Should I know that every echo had the world's approving stamp,
My awakened soul would listen for the violin in camp

4 August, 1909.

"Just a laughing little mirror, just a shining little gem." Photo by I. M. Jensen

MYSTIC LAKE.

In a valley of the mountain that was made for thee alone
Thou art mistress, little ruby, thou art very much at home.
Like a setting is thy valley of a very precious stone.
Like a jewel art thou, ruby, from the mountain's crested dome.

When the storms that sweep the summits seek thy nest, thou little sprite,
They will find no boats to shatter, they will find no ships to wreck.
They will find thee quaintly smiling in thy valley's arms locked tight,
And their angry, blustering torment thou can'st laughingly reflect.

May thy ruby, little valley, be to thee forevermore
Just a laughing little mirror, just a shining little gem.
Tell thy flowers to creep up closer to her grassy sloping shore
Till they crown her laughing forehead—a living diadem.

6 August, 1909.

CRATER LAKE.

How placid thy waters here high on the mountain
With castles above thee and forests around!
How sheer are the cliffs that frown o'er thy bosom!
How clear the wild echoings sharply rebound!

In ages agone when mountain fires smoldered
And ice-laden clouds sought vainly to drown,
Thy parent arose, majestic in grandeur,
And gazed o'er the canyons neath snow jewelled crown.

The king of the nether world marshaled his demons,
Arrayed them to battle with ice-cloud and rock;
They shook the deep canyons and far valleys trembled
And trembled thy mountain in fierce battle shock.

In vain was the sceptre of snow mountain's kingdom
Uplifted as signal to all the grand clan;
In vain, for the demons had centered their forces,
Had rushed to the battle with masterful plan.

So down came the crown and low fell the sceptre,
Away flowed the jewels in hot molten streams,
And far distant cliffs in sympathy echoed
The booming and roars of a monarch's death screams.

The demons, in leaving, raised rude sculptured castle
As symbol that here had once reigned a king
And near it the trees have lifted their branches
Inviting the robins to nest there and sing.

Then soft in the wound that the fire demons blasted
Thy clean limpid waters have silently crept;
Aloft art thou held a mountain's pure chalice
Of tears vanquished ice-clouds while dying have wept.

6 August, 1909.

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